

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

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R 081155Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6254

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1455

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT. PO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: COMMUNIST LABOR VICTORY

REF: LISBON 0897 (DTG 101219Z FEB 76)

SUMMARY: SOUTHERN-ZONE PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS APPROVED A PCP-INTERSINDICAL BACKED UNION STATUTE BY NARROW MARGIN AS ANTI-COMMUNIST WORKERS WERE UNABLE TO GET TOGETHER. DEFEAT COULD LEAD TO REEVALUATION BY THE SOCIALIST UNIONS OF THEIR GO-IT-ALONE STRATEGY. END SUMMARY.

1. COMMUNIST LABOR VICTORY: THE SOUTHER ZONE PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS (INCLUDING DISTRICTS OF BEJA, CASTELO BRANCO, EVORA, FARO, LISBON, AND PORTALEGRE) APPROVED ON MAR 7 A PCP-INTERSINDICAL BACKED UNION STATUTE, NARROWLY DE-
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FEATING A SOCIALIST-BACKED STATUTE. THE RESULTS WERE:
PROJECT A (PCP), 7274; PROJECT B (INDEPENDENT), 1845;
PROJECT C (PS), 7136; PROJECT D, (MRPP) 863; PROJECT E,
(PPD AND PCP-ML), 3481

2. PARTY LISTS: POLITICAL PARTIES ANNOUNCED THE COM-
POSITION OF THEIR LIESTS FOR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ELECTIONS. FINAL LISTS ARE DUE BY MIDNIGHT MARCH 8. THE
PCP LIST WAS THE FIRST PRESENTED, AND WAS NOTABLE FOR
THE LARGE NUMBER OF "INDEPENDENTS." PS LIST DID NOT
INCLUDE ANY PPD DISSIDENTS OR SOCIALIST INTERVENTION
GROUP MEMBERS (EX-MES). PS DISTRIBUTED ITS MANY NATIONALLY
KNOWN FIGURES AMONG THE 22 ELECTION DISTRICTS. PPD RELIED
MORE HEAVILY ON LOCAL CANDIDATES, AND ALSO STAYED AWAY
FROM INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES. CDS LIST INCLUDED SEVERAL
INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES -- MOST NOTABLE BEING GEN GALVAO DE
MELO AT HEAD OF VISEU LIST. PS, PCP AND CDS RAN THEIR
LEADERS, MARIO SOARES, ALVARO CUNHAL AND DIOGO FREITAS
DO AMARAL AT HEAD OF LISBON LISTS. SA CARNEIRO HEADS PPD
LIST IN OPORTO.

3. EANES SPEAKS: IN EVORA, WHERE HE WAS VISITING
SOUTHERN MILITARY REGION HEADQUARTERS MARCH 5, ARMY CHIEF
OF STAFF EANES RESPONDED TO PRESS INQUIRIES AS FOLLOWS:

-- PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY: EANES HAD NOT YET DEFINITELY
REMOVED HIMSELF AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. FOR HIM TO
CONSIDER RUNNING, HOWEVER, CERTAIN CONDITIONS WOULD
HAVE TO EXIST IN PORTUGAL WHICH CURRENTLY DO NOT PREVAIL. HE
DID NOT SPECIFY THE CONDITIONS.

-- AZEVEDO CANDIDACY: ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD APPROVE
OF PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO AS A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE,
EANES REPLIED THAT HIS APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL WAS IRRE-
LEVANT. AZEVEDO, OR ANYONE ELSE, COULD BE A CANDIDATE
SO LONG AS HE MET THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

-- SPINOLA: IT WOULD BE "INOPPORTUNE" FOR SPINOLA TO
RETURN TO PORTUGAL AT THIS TIME. IF HE RETURNED, HE
WOULD BE ARRESTED AND QUESTIONED ON HIS ROLE IN THE ABORTIVE
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MARCH 11, 1974 RIGHT WING COUP.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE
PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS OPPOSED THE PCP-INTERSINDICAL STATUTE,
THE MAJORITY WAS UNABLE TO AGREE UPON A COMMON PROGRAM. THIS
MARKS THE FIRST SETBACK FOR THE PS GO-IT-ALONE STRATEGY APPROVED
AT THE RECENT MEETING OF SOCIALIST TRADE UNIONS AT AVEIRO

(REFTEL). THE DEFEAT COULD LEAD TO A REEVALUATION OF THAT STRATEGY.

5. EANES, AS WELL AS OTHER PROMINENT MILITARY MEN, ARE ASKED LEADING QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACIES AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY; THE PRESS SEIZES UPON ANY OPENING TO FEED FURTHER SPECULATION. THE ARMA, WHO HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH EANES DURING EANES'S RECENT NATO VISIT, BELIEVES THAT EANES POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED -- ONLY VERY COMPELLING REASONS WOULD CONVINCE HIM TO CONSIDER RUNNING.
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